



TOXIC DUST AWARENESS— ASBESTOS & LEAD

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Things to Do Before Training

- ▶ Determine whether a survey of materials that will be disturbed by construction has been conducted to detect the presence of asbestos or lead.
- ▶ Ensure that only specifically trained and certified employees work with materials containing asbestos or lead.
- ▶ In the index of the *Cal/OSHA Pocket Guide for the Construction Industry*, look up **Asbestos** and **Lead** and read the pages listed.

Introduction

Toxic dust particles on construction sites can be inhaled or swallowed and result in serious health damage. Long-term exposure to asbestos can cause asbestosis or lung cancer. Long-term exposure to lead can damage your brain, kidneys, and your ability to have children.

Only specifically trained and certified workers can work with materials containing asbestos or lead. Other workers must stay out of the restricted areas where this work is being performed.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- ▶ Has anyone been on a job site where asbestos or lead was a concern? What was done to address the problem?
- ▶ What types of job activities disturb asbestos or lead?
- ▶ What kind of work could cause exposure to asbestos or lead on this job?
- ▶ What materials could contain asbestos or lead on this job?
- ▶ What basic precautions should the properly trained workers be taking with these materials? What basic precautions should all workers on the job take if these materials are present on the site?



ACTION TO TAKE

- ▶ Discuss what materials on the job might contain asbestos or lead.
- ▶ Restrict entrance to areas where asbestos or lead is present or suspected to be present.

Key Points to Keep in Mind

Asbestos

- ☐ Asbestos fibers may be released into the air when work involves removing or disturbing asbestos materials.
- ☐ These materials may be found in:
 - floor tile ■ fireproofing materials ■ cement pipes and panels
 - roofing materials ■ insulation
- ☐ Work involving asbestos disturbance must be done by specifically trained and certified workers taking the following precautions:
 - **Contain, isolate, and restrict access** to the asbestos work area.
 - Follow careful **personnel and equipment decontamination procedures**.
 - Remove waste only in **properly sealed and labeled containers or bags**.
 - **Pass clearance air sampling** before contained work area is dismantled.
 - Wear at least a **half-mask respirator** (see **Safety Break card 15** on respirators).

Lead

- ☐ Lead paint turns into lead dust when lead-painted surfaces are disturbed. This happens during renovations, removal, abatement, or demolition.
- ☐ **All workers on a site where lead is disturbed or where there is lead contamination should take the following basic precautions:**
 - Stay out of **restricted work areas**.
 - **Wash up** before eating, drinking, smoking, or chewing gum or tobacco.
 - **Do not eat, drink, or smoke** in contaminated areas.
 - Change out of work clothes before leaving the work site to avoid taking lead home.
- ☐ **Specifically trained and certified workers should take the following steps to prevent lead contamination:**
 - **Restrict access** to the work area.
 - **Work in a way that minimizes dust**; for example, by using vacuum-attached tools.
 - Work in a way that does not spread or track dust to other areas.
 - **Carefully clean up** lead debris and dust, preferably using HEPA vacuums.
 - Wear at least a **half-mask respirator** (see **Safety Break card 15** on respirators).
 - Change out of work clothes before leaving the work site to avoid taking lead home.